

Donated Conservation Easement Funding Opportunity

In 1990, congress created the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) as part of the Farm Bill. The purpose of FLP is to protect environmentally important forestlands threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. Through funding from the Forest Service State & Private Forestry and collaborative work with sponsoring land trusts, the Idaho Forest Legacy Program encourages and supports acquisition of conservation easements (CEs) on privately owned forestlands.

Forest Legacy grant funds are typically used only for purchasing conservation easements to be held by the State. Idaho currently has a unique opportunity to help conservation organizations and landowners to facilitate the donation of conservation easements on forest land. Available grant funds can be used to reimburse land trusts and/or landowners for most due diligence expenses associated with a donated conservation easement. These grant funds are due to expire in August 2015.

Potential projects must meet the following eligibility requirements.

Eligibility requirements:

1. The property must be owned by a private entity (non-government)
2. The conservation easement must be **fully donated**
3. A majority of the property **must be forested**
4. A property must have an **Idaho Forest Stewardship Plan** before closing

Projects that qualify:

1. Grant funds expire **August 2015**
2. Both landowners and land trusts are eligible for these grant funds. Eligible due diligence costs for reimbursement include: baseline documentation, ESA, title insurance, mineral survey, Forest Stewardship Plan, legal expenses and staff costs. **Appraisal services and stewardship endowment funds** do not qualify for reimbursement
3. The conservation easement must be held by a qualified non-profit organization
4. Reimbursement occurs after the conservation easement is recorded

Please contact Karen Sjoquist if you have any questions, especially if you have a project that meets the eligibility requirements.

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